

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 TRSE-00 EUR-12
IO-13 /075 W
-----310611Z 000727 /14

O R 310530Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4840
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 2919

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, BG
SUBJECT: ZIA RECEIVES HIS MANDATE

REF: DACCA 2910

1. THE VOTING IN PRESIDENT ZIA'S REFERENDUM YESTERDAY (MAY 30) WAS BRISK, FAIRLY HEAVY ACCORDING TO SPOT CHECKS, AND PEACEFUL. AS OF EARLY MORNING MAY 31, WITH APPROXIMATELY 42 PERCENT OF THE VOTE COUNTED, PRESIDENT ZIA HAD RECEIVED OVER SIXTEEN MILLION "YES" VOTES AND ABOUT 233,000 "NO" VOTES, FOR A FAVORABLE MARGIN OF OVER 98 PERCENT. THERE IS AS YET NO OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING VOTER PARTICIPATION BUT OBSERVERS REPORT THAT THE TURNOUT IN DACCA SEEMED LARGER THAN FOR THE 1973 ELECTIONS, IN WHICH 36 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE PARTICIPATED.

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2. YESTERDAY WAS DECLARED A NATIONAL HOLIDAY IN ORDER THAT AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE COULD GO TO THE POLLS. DURING DRIVES AROUND THE CITY MID-MORNING AND AFTERNOON, EMBOFFS FOUND IT QUIET. ORDERLY LINES EXISTED AT SEVERAL POLLING PLACES, WHERE THERE WERE SEPARATE LINES FOR WOMEN AND MEN. IN THE TEJGAON INDUSTRIAL SECTION OF THE CITY (AND PERHAPS OTHER PLACES AS WELL), CYCLE RICKSHAWS

WERE CARRYING WOMEN TO AND FROM THE POLLING STATIONS AT NO COST. RUMOR HAD IT THAT THE RICKSHAW OWNERS HAD PAID FORTY TAKA TO EACH DRIVER TO TRANSPORT THE WOMEN. NEWSPAPERS ARE ALSO FILLED THIS MORNING WITH PICTURES OF WOMEN LINED UP TO VOTE. NO SOLDIERS WERE SEEN ANYWHERE IN THE CITY. AT SEVERAL POLLING CENTERS, BLUE-SHIRTED METROPOLITAN POLICE LOUNGED UNDER NEARBY TREES AS THE POLLING STATIONS AND LINES SEEMED TO BE QUITE ORDERLY. THERE WAS ONLY ONE RUMOR OF TROUBLE: APPARENTLY EARLY IN THE MORNING, TWO TRUCKLOADS OF STUDENTS, ABOUT FORTY IN ALL, ARRIVED AT A POLLING STATION NEAR DACCA UNIVERSITY AND BEGAN TO HECKLE THE VOTERS IN LINE. THE STUDENTS REPORTEDLY WERE QUICKLY DISPERSED BY THE POLICE. NO OTHER TROUBLE HAS BEEN REPORTED.

3. THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TOLD US HE WAS SATISFIED THAT THE POLLING HAD BEEN FREE AND FAIR. HE VISITED A NUMBER OF POLLING PLACES DURING THE COURSE OF THE DAY AND OBSERVED THE PROCEDURES IN DETAIL. HE SAID HE SAW NO EVIDENCE OF PRESSURE BEING BROUGHT TO BEAR AND THAT THE BALLOTING ITSELF SEEMED TO BE SECRET. MASTERS

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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